

Tom Horne
Superintendent

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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HORNE INVESTIGATION REVEALS MEXICAN RESIDENTS ILLEGALLY ATTENDING SCHOOLS IN AJO

TUCSON (Tuesday, December 15, 2009_ -- State schools chief Tom Horne today released the results of an Arizona Department of Education investigation showing that a substantial number of Mexican residents are being bused to public schools in Ajo in violation of Arizona law.

“I am releasing video evidence that shows very clearly that Mexican residents are being bused from the international border crossing at Lukeville, Arizona to attend school at the Ajo Unified School District. Arizona law is clear: public school students, regardless of their citizenship, must reside within the state,” Horne stated.

“Our investigation is the result of numerous complaints we have received from constituents who observed these activities or who knew of Mexican residents attending Ajo schools. Earlier this year, the Arizona Department of Education formally requested the Pima County School Superintendent to provide verification of U.S. residency for all students who attend schools in the Ajo district. This request was repeatedly rebuffed so I therefore had little recourse but to initiate my own investigation,” Horne added.

Video evidence reveals that shortly after the Lukeville border crossing is open at 6 AM on school days, Mexican residents enter the U.S. either on foot or by car and students board school buses parked approximately 200 yards north of the border. The buses are marked “Pima County Schools” and, according to Arizona Department of Transportation records, are registered to the Pima County School District.

“I have asked the Arizona Attorney General’s office to investigate this matter further. Arizona taxpayers cannot be expected to pay for the education of students who don’t live in Arizona and I am committed to putting a stop to this illegal activity,” Horne concluded.

[Click here](#) for copies of the correspondence between the Arizona Department of Education and Pima County Superintendent. The video as well chronological description of the video is also posted at www.azed.gov/pio/Press-Releases/2009/ajovideo.asp.

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